

Message Text

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45

ACTION IO-10

INFO OCT-01 AF-06 EUR-12 NEA-10 ISO-00 ACDA-05 CIAE-00

DODE-00 PM-03 H-02 INR-07 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01

PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 USIA-06 OMB-01 EA-06 TRSE-00 IOE-00

ARA-06 SAB-01 /103 W

----- 035806

P R 231400Z JUL 75 ZFF LIMA

FM AMEMBASSY JIDDA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 1934

INFO AMEMBASSY AMMAN

AMEMBASSY ABU DHABI

AMEMBASSY ANKARA

AMEMBASSY BEIRUT

AMEMBASSY CAIRO

AMEMBASSY DAMASCUS

AMEMBASSY DOHA

AMEMBASSY KHARTOUM

AMEMBASSY KUWAIT

AMEMBASSY LIMA

AMEMBASSY MANAMA

AMEMBASSY RABAT

AMEMBASSY SANA

AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV

AMEMBASSY TUNIS

AMEMBASSY TRIPOLI

USMISSION USUN NEW YORK

C O N F I D E N T I A L JIDDA 5216

BEIRUT PASS BAGHDAD

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: SA, US, UNGA, XF

SUBJECT: SAUDI VIEWS ON ISRAEL AND THE UN

REF: (A) JIDDA 5192 (NOTAL); (B) JIDDA 5189 (NOTAL);

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(C) STATE 170841 (NOTAL)

SUMMARY: VARIOUS SAUDI OFFICIALS BELIEVE IT PROBABLE THAT THE ISLAMIC FOREIGN MINISTERS' RESOLUTION TO EXPEL ISRAEL FROM THE UNITED NATIONS WILL BE REPEATED AT THE OAU CONFERENCE IN KAMPALA, AND THE NON-ALIGNED CONFERENCE IN LIMA. THEY THINK THAT BY THE TIME THE UNGA OPENS, THIS PROPOSAL WILL HAVE ACQUIRED SO MUCH MOMENTUM THAT IT MAY BE IMPOSSIBLE TO STOP. THEY ADMIT THIS PROPOSAL HINDERS OUR EFFORTS TO BRING ABOUT A PEACE SETTLEMENT IN THE MIDDLE EAST, AND COULD SPELL TROUBLE FOR THE U.N. THEY WOULD LAY THE BLAME FOR SUCH DEVELOPMENTS ON ISRAELI INTRANSIGENCE AND THE VERY SLOW PACE OF U.S. PEACE EFFORTS. MINISTER OF PLANNING NAZER SAYS FREE WORLD BLOC IN U.N. NEEDS MORE U.S. LEADERSHIP, BUT ARGUES WE SHOULD NOT BEGIN UNGA SESSION BY MAKING A SHOWDOWN STAND ON AN ISSUE WHERE WE ARE LIKELY TO BE BADLY BEATEN. IF IT IS CLEAR THAT A MASSIVE MAJORITY WILL VOTE AGAINST US AT UNGA, OUR STAND SHOULD BE UNWAVERING; BUT IT MAY ALSO BE BETTER NOT TO PREFACE A SETBACK BY A MAXIMUM POLITICAL EFFORT IN CAPITALS AROUND WORLD. END SUMMARY

1. DRAWING UPON SECRETARY'S SPEECH (REF C) CHARGE AND EMBOFFS HAVE IN RECENT DAYS SPOKE WITH A NUMBER OF SAUDI OFFICIALS ABOUT THEIR VIEWS ON THE ISLAMIC FONMINS CONFERENCE RESOLUTION TO EXPEL ISRAEL FROM THE UNITED NATIONS, AND WHAT THIS MAY PROTEND FOR THE UN SYSTEM. THE SAUDIS INCLUDE DEPFONMIN MOHAMMED MAS'UD, MINISTER OF PLANNING HISHAM NAZER, UNDERSECRETARY FOR POLITICAL AFFAIRS AT FONMINISTRY AMBASSADOR ABUDLRAHMAN AL-MANSURI, PLUS MINISTRY'S DIRECTOR OF WESTERN AFFAIRS AMBASSADOR NURI IBRAHIM, AND DIRECTOR IF ISLAMIC AFFAIRS AMBASSADOR SALEH SUGHAYR. ALL OF THESE OFFICIALS PERCEIVED THE SIGNIFICANCE OF THE RESOLUTION PASSED BY THE ISLAMIC FONMINS. THEY AGREED THAT THE CONFERENCE'S RESOLUTION COULD MAKE THE U.S.'S TASK OF PROMOTING A PEACEFUL SETTLEMENT MORE DIFFICULT; BUT NONE WERE DEFENSIVE OR APOLIGETIC AT THE CONFERENCE'S POSITION. WHEN PRESSED, THEY RESPONDED THAT ISRAEL WAS CHIEFLY TO BLAME FOR OBVIOUSLY DRAGGING ITS FEET; SEVERAL SPOKE OF RABIN'S STATEMENT THAT NEGOTIATIONS ON THE SECOND STAGE OF A PARTIAL SETTLEMENT MIGHT TAKE UP TO A YEAR; CONFIDENTIAL

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THEY ALSO SAID THE U.S. WAS ITSELF PARTLY TO BLAME FOR WHAT WE CONSIDERED AN UNHELPPFUL RESOLUTION BECAUSE ALMOST TWO YEARS HAD ELAPSED SINCE THE OCTOBER WAR, AND PROGRESS TOWARD A U.S.-INDUCED SETTLEMENT WAS VERY SLOW. MINISTER NAZER SAID THE EGYPTIANS HAD BEEN SUBJECT TO SOMETHING APPROACHING RIDICULE WHEN THEY INDICATED A LACK OF ENTHUSIASM FOR THE CONFERENCE'S ISRAEL RESOLUTION. HE SAID MORE MILITANT ARABS HAD POINTED OUT AFTER

TWO YEARS, EGYPT WAS STILL BICKERING WITH ISRAEL VIA THE U.S. OVER "A FEW KILOMETERS OF DESERT" WHILE OTHER ISSUES SUCH AS THE PALESTINIANS AND ISRAEL'S OCCUPATION OF GOLAN, THE WEST BANK AND JERUSALEM HAD NOT EVEN BEEN ADDRESSED, NOR--AT THE RATE OF PROGRESS--WOULD THEY BE ADDRESSED SOON.

2. SAUDI OFFICIALS BELIEVED THE JIDDA CONFERENCE'S RESOLUTION ON ISRAEL WAS LIKELY TO ESTABLISH A PRECEDENT THAT DELEGATIONS AT KAMPALA, LIMA, AND FINALLY THE UNGA WOULD HAVE A HARD TIME BACKING DOWN FROM. DEPFONMIN MAS'UD SAID IT WAS ALMOST CERTAIN THAT THE SAME INTER-REGIONAL TRADEOFFS THAT RESULTED IN

RESOLUTIONS AT THE JIDDA CONFERENCE ON ANGOLA, MOZAMBIQUE, SOUTH AFRICA AND ISRAEL, AND OTHER ISSUES IN BETWEEN, WOULD BE REPEATED AT THE ABOVE CONFERENCES WITH THEIR OVERLAPPING AREAS OF MEMBERSHIP. THE PROPOSAL TO EXPEL ISRAEL FROM THE UN THEREFORE MIGHT GATHER SUCH MOMENTUM THAT WHEN THE UNGA CONVENED, STEAMROLLER PSYCHOLOGY COULD CARRY EVEN SOME RELUCTANT DELEGATIONS WITH IT. (UNDERSECRETARY AL-MANSOURI SAID THAT EVEN TURKEY WOULD FIND IT HARD TO WITHSTAND SUCH PRESSURE. HE SAID THE TURKS WERE DISPLEASED WITH THE UNITED STATES, AND THAT THEIR FOREIGN MINISTER HAD ATTENDED THE ISLAMIC CONFERENCE AND INVITED IT TO CONVENE IN TURKEY NEXT YEAR TO SHOW THAT TURKEY WOULD HENCEFORTH CULTIVATE ITS ARAB AND MUSLIM FRIENDS MORE CLOSELY).

3. SEVERAL OF THE SAUDI OFFICIALS SAID THEY REGRETTED THAT THE U.S.--IN DECIDING ON A MORE ACTIVIST STANCE AT THE U.N.--SHOULD MAKE ITS INITIAL STAND OVER THE ISSUE OF ISRAEL'S MEMBERSHIP. THE MORAL ISSUES ON WHICH THE U.S. COULD PROVIDE LEADERSHIP AGAINST THE COMMUNISTS AND TMK EXTREME LEFT WOULD BE OBSCURED. HISHAM NAZER SAID IT WOULD

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BE LIKE A GENERAL DELIBERATELY CHOOSING THE LEAST ADVANTAGEOUS BAOXLE SITE; LIKEWISE HE ADVISED AGAINST U.S. THREATS TO REAPPRAISE ITS POLICY TOWARD THE U.N. IF ISRAEL WERE EXPELLED. HE SAID THAT "CRIES OF PAIN AND RAGE" FROM WASHINGTON AT WHAT MIGHT HAPPEN TO ISRAEL WERE MUSIC TO THE EARS OF OUR RADICAL CRITICS. THESE PEOPLE DID NOT THINK AHEAD TO WHAT WOULD HAPPEN TO THE UN IF WE CUT BACK OUR SUPPORT, THEY WERE STIMULATED BY THE PROSPECTS OF CONFRONTING THE U.S. AND MANY WANTED TO SEE THE UNITED STATES' PRESTIGE WEAKENED BY DEFEATS AT THE HANDS OF OVERWHELMING, HOSTILE VOTING MAJORITIES.

4. THE BRITISH CHARGE MADE A DEMARCHE IN RESPONSE TO INSTRUCTIONS ON JULY 22 TO ISLAMIC AFFAIRS DIRECTOR SUGHAYR. KAY POINTED OUT THE DAMAGE TO THE UN AND U.S. PEACEMAKING

EFFORTS THAT COULD RESULT IF THE ISLAMIC FONMINS RESOLUTION ON ISRAEL ACHIEVED WIDER CURRENCY. HE SAID SUGHAYR SPEAKING OFFICIALLY VIGOROUSLY STOOD BY THE ISLAMIC FONMINS' RESOLUTION ON ISRAEL, AND THOUGHT IT WOULD SPREAD. SPEAKING PERSONALLY, SUGHAYR ADDED HE THOUGHT IT WOULD BE A GOOD IDEA TO HAVE ISRAEL OUT OF THE UN. THIS WAY THE LEGALITY OF THE STATE ITSELF COULD BE ADDRESSED AS A NEXT ITEM OF BUSINESS.

5. COMMENT:

A. THE SAG, HAVING HOSTED THE CONFERENCE AT WHICH THE RESOLUTION TO EXPEL ISRAEL WAS FIRST PROPOUNDED (AND WITH MIN STATE PRINCE SA'UD IN THE CHAIR) WILL GO DOWN THE LINE ON THIS ISSUE WHEN IT COMES UP AGAIN.

B. IF A RESOLUTION TO EXPEL ISRAEL FROM THE UNITED NATIONS COULD COME OUT OF A RELATIVELY CONSERVATIVE MEETING AND VENUE SUCH AS THE ISLAMIC FOREIGN MINISTERS IN JIDDA, WE CAN PROBABLY EXPECT NO MORE MODERATION FROM THE OAU MEETING, NOR FROM THAT OF NON-ALIGNED STATES IN LIMA (THE DRAFT FINAL RESOLUTION OF NON-ALIGNED MINISTERIAL MEETING IN HAVANA IN MARCH 1975 CAUSED EVEN OUR EMBASSY VETERANS OF THE MIDDLE EAST AND AFRICA TO BLINK.

C. EVEN IF IT BECOMES APPARENT FROM THE REACTION OF OTHER POSTS
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THAT THE UNGA VOTE WILL BE EXTRAVAGANTLY LOPSIDED, OUR STAND SHOULD BE CLEAR AND UNWAVERING. AT SAME TIME IT MAY BE BETTER FOR US NOT TO MAKE A MAXIMUM POLITICAL EFFORT ON THIS ISSUE IN CAPITALS AROUND THE WORLD. A

REBUFF IN THESE CIRCUMSTANCES WOULD HARM OUR LEADERSHIP POTENTIAL AND MIGHT COMPEL US TO CARRY THROUGH WITH SOME ATTENUATION OF OUR ROLE IN THE UN--WHICH WOULD GIVE THE RADICALS PLEASURE AND LEAVE THEM IN A STRONGER POSITION YET.
HORAN

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: EXPULSION, NONALIGNED NATIONS, RESOLUTIONS
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 23 JUL 1975
Decaption Date: 01 JAN 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: CunninFX
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 28 MAY 2004
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1975JIDDA05216
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: GS
Errors: N/A
Film Number: D750254-0438
From: JIDDA
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1975/newtext/t19750730/aaaabauc.tel
Line Count: 212
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Office: ACTION IO
Original Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 4
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: 75 JIDDA 5192, 75 JIDDA 5189, 75 STATE 170841
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: CunninFX
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 01 JUL 2003
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <01 JUL 2003 by BoyleJA>; APPROVED <10 NOV 2003 by CunninFX>
Review Markings:

Margaret P. Grafeld
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
06 JUL 2006

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: SAUDI VIEWS ON ISRAEL AND THE UN
TAGS: PFOR, PORG, SA, US, XF, OAU
To: STATE
Type: TE
Markings: Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 06 JUL 2006